Dr ALAN STEWART spoke on "Glow-worms and light pollution – an urban myth or insidious threat?" There are three species of glow-worm in Britain, of which *Lampyris noctiluca* (L.) is the only widespread species. It has a two-year life cycle spread over three years. Eggs are laid in the soil in June–July and these hatch in late summer. The larvae feed on snails, doing most of their development in the second summer and pupating in the following spring. The adult beetles do not feed and are short lived. The females are flightless; this means the species has limited dispersal powers and is vulnerable to changes in land use.

The female beetles emit a cold whitish green light from the last three abdominal segments as a means of attracting males. Male beetles and the larvae can also emit light. The females crawl up plant stems in the evening and begin to glow when it is fully dark. After mating has taken place females stop producing light. Males have colour vision and locate glowing females by sight.

Glow-worms appear to be in decline. They are under threat from habitat destruction or deterioration because of vegetation succession. Habitat fragmentation is also a problem. Light pollution is a growing problem that may be affecting glow-worms. Low-pressure sodium street lights produce an intense light in a narrow colour spectrum. High-pressure sodium lights give a less intense light over a wide spectrum, including short wave. Male glow-worms respond most strongly to the yellow-green part of the colour spectrum, similar to the light produced by female glow-worms. Males are inhibited by short wave light and so may be affected by high-pressure sodium lights. Females do not glow during the day and could be affected by lighting at night. Females glow on average for about 30 minutes but may do so for up to three hours. Producing light has a metabolic cost and longer periods of glowing may result in reduced fecundity because of delayed mating or reduced female body weight.

SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

Additional records of *Dolerus megapterus* Cameron (Hymenoptera: Tenthredinidae) from Wiltshire. – Jonty Denton and Graham Collins recently reported the occurrence of this rare sawfly in carr woodland adjacent to the Kennet & Avon canal in Berkshire (*BJENHS* **18** (2005): 44). I collected single males of this species at a fenland site near Pewsey, Wilts. on 7.vi.2000 and from North Meadow NNR, near Cricklade, Wilts. on 12.vi.2001. Interestingly the former site is close to the banks of the Kennet & Avon Canal. – K. J. GREARSON, 10 Eastfield, Ashton Keynes, Swindon, Wiltshire SN6 PR.

Winter occurrence of *Eupteryx filicum* (Newman) (Hemiptera: Cicadellidae) in east Kent. – This leafhopper appears to be common in suitable areas of southern and western England including Kent. Nymphs and adults feed on a range of ferns often causing appreciable frond damage. According to the RES Handbook on Cicadellidae (Le Quesne & Payne, 1981) *E. filicum* occurs as late as September and October. Adults of this species were swept from male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas* in Perry Woods, Selling on 28.xi. and 10.xii.04, 16.i.05 and 3.ii.05 indicating that a proportion of individuals survive through the winter months. In east Kent, snow fell virtually every day for two weeks during late February–early March (up to 2 m recorded in Slade hamlet higher up on the Downs) causing structural damage to plants. The ferns were totally crushed and no live *E. filicum* was found once the snow had receded. – J. S. BADMIN, Coppice Place, Selling, Kent ME13 9RP.